

REMARKS

Claims 22-25, 49-52 and 56-62 are presently pending in the application. Claims 22-25 have been amended in this response. More specifically, claims 23-25 have been rewritten in independent form without narrowing or otherwise changing the scope of these claims.

In the Office Action mailed August 11, 2005, claims 22-25, 49-52 and 56-62 were rejected. More specifically, the status of the claims in light of this Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,783,098 to Martin et al. ("Martin"); and

(B) Claims 22-25, 49-52 and 56-62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,248,001 to Carson et al. ("Carson") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,997,388 to Canella et al. ("Canella").

A. Response to the Section 102(b) Rejection

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Martin. As described below, Martin fails to disclose or suggest all of the features of this claim.

1. Claim 22 is Directed to a Method for Finishing a Surface of a Protective Package on a Microelectronic Device Including, *inter alia*, Etching a Surface of the Package to Form a Marking Surface

Claim 22 is directed to a method for finishing a surface of a protective package on a microelectronic device. The method includes etching at least a portion of the surface of the package to remove a layer of material from the package and form a marking surface, and cleaning residual materials and/or chemicals from the package after terminating the etching of the package surface.

2. Martin Discloses Removing an Encapsulant From a Packaged Device to Expose the Wire-bonds and/or Chip For Inspection, Testing, or Repair

Martin discloses a method for etching the encapsulant of a packaged electronic device to expose the chip, wire-bonds, and/or other elements of the device. The electronic device is at least partially decapsulated "to allow for inspection, test and repair of the chip and the wire bonds . . . after the epoxy covering these elements is safely and effectively removed." (Martin 1:28-31.)

3. Martin Fails to Disclose or Suggest a Method for Finishing a Surface of a Protective Package on a Microelectronic Device Including, *inter alia*, Etching a Surface of a Package to Form a Marking Surface

Martin fails to disclose or suggest a method for finishing a surface of a protective package on a microelectronic device including, *inter alia*, "etching at least a portion of the surface of the package to remove a layer of material from the package and form a marking surface," as recited in claim 22. Rather, Martin discloses etching and decapsulating a portion of an electronic device to expose an internal component for inspection, testing, or repair. Accordingly, Martin's method of etching completely removes a portion of the encapsulant and does not form a marking surface. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to modify Martin's method and form a marking surface because such a modification would frustrate one purpose of Martin's invention, which is to expose an internal component for inspection, testing, or repair. Accordingly, the Section 102(b) rejection of claim 22 should be withdrawn because Martin fails to disclose or suggest all the features of the claim.

B. Response to the Section 103(a) Rejection

Claims 22-25, 49-52 and 56-62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carson in view of Canella. Carson and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, subject to an obligation of assignment to Micron Technology, Inc. As such, Carson cannot be used as a reference to support a Section 103(a) rejection of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 22-25, 49-52 and 56-62 should be withdrawn.

C. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the claims pending in the application comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and patentably define over the applied art. The applicants accordingly request reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned representative at (206) 359-6465.

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Respectfully submitted,

Perkins Coie LLP



David T. Dutcher
Registration No. 51,638

Correspondence Address:

Customer No. 25096
Perkins Coie LLP
P.O. Box 1247
Seattle, Washington 98111-1247
(206) 359-8000